Poppiana dentata (Freshwater Crab)

Order: Decapoda (Crabs, Lobsters and Shrimps)
Class: Malacostraca (Crustaceans: Crabs, Sand-hoppers and Woodlice)
Phylum: Arthropoda (Arthropods)

Fig. 1. Freshwater crab, *Poppiana dentata.*

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279455799, downloaded 30 October 2016]

TRAITS. The freshwater crab *Poppiana dentata* is a generally small, rusty-red coloured crab (Fig. 1). Males reach about 59 × 43mm and females 47 × 33mm, carapace breadth × carapace length (Magalhaes and Turkay, 1996). Their carapace is smooth and convex, with serrations along the front edge. The abdomen is triangular, especially in the male crab; the third and fourth abdomenal segments are fused in both male and female (Garces-Villalba and Arrieta-Jimenez, 2005). The female crabs have two claws of the same size where as males have a large one and a small one (Fig. 2). This species was formerly known as *Dilocarcinus dentatus.*

DISTRIBUTION. These freshwater crabs are found in Trinidad and northern South America; Venezuela, Suriname, Guyana, French Guiana, Colombia and Brazil (Fig. 3). They are found in abundance in river basins, streams and wetlands at low altitudes, 0-80m above sea level (Cumberlidge, 2008).

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY. These crabs are found in freshwater systems around sedimentary deposits (Garces-Villalba and Arrieta-Jimenez, 2005) within the neotropics. They are ominvouros scavengers, sometimes feeding on leaf litter (Skov and Hartnoll, 2002), mostly at night. Crabs mate when the female is in the moulting process as the hard exoskeleton is a barrier at other times (Stevens, 2016). Female crabs can store sperm until their eggs are ready to be

fertilized. The fertilized eggs are then kept safe and moist under her abdomen in a spongy layer (Davey, 2000). Male freshwater crabs typically attract females to mate by waving their big claw to impress her. The larger male claw is advantageous when they fight with each other.

APPLIED BIOLOGY. *Poppiana dentata* has a very wide distribution and seems to have stable populations, therefore it is listed as Least Concern by IUCN. The major threats to these crabs are loss of habitat due to human activity, contamination of both their habitat and food (Cumberlidge, 2008).

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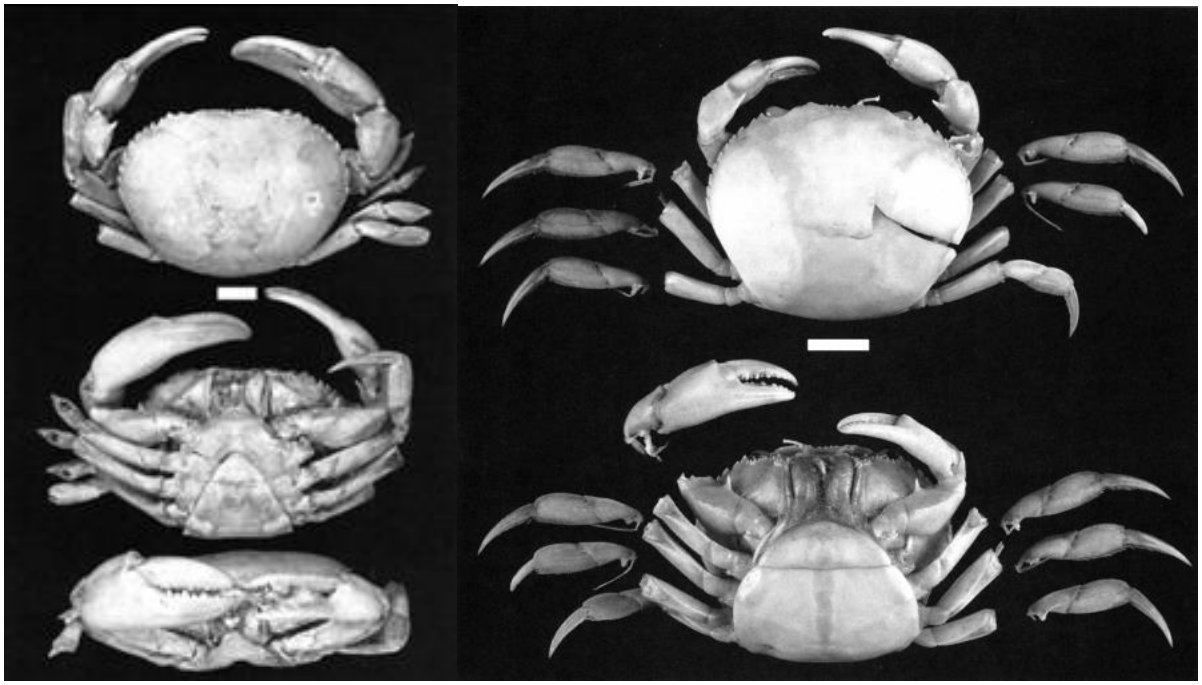

Fig. 2. Male (left) and female (right) *Poppiana dentata* (scale bars: 10mm).

[https://decapoda.nhm.org/pdfs/31100/31100.pdf, downloaded 28 October 2016]

Fig. 3. Distribution of *Poppiana dentata.*

[IUCN.UK.2008.RLTS.T134943A4039966.en.pdf, downloaded 30 October 2016]